



## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

August 31, 1977

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TO: ARA - Ambassador Todman  
THROUGH: ARA - Ambassador Stedman  
FROM: ARA/ECA - Robert W. Zimmermann  
SUBJECT: Your Meeting with the American Jewish Committee - Thursday, September 1 - 5:00 pm.

Four representatives of the American Jewish Committee will meet with you Thursday, September 1 at 5:00 pm. Those attending will be Richard Maas, President of the AJC, Bertram Gold, Executive Vice President, David Geller, Director of Latin American Affairs, and Jacobo Kovadloff, who ran the AJC office in Buenos Aires.

The discussion will center around Geller's recent trip to Argentina and the growing concern of the Argentine Jewish community that anti-Semitism is increasing within the GOA. Geller told us that the AJC is especially distressed by the Reznizky kidnapping (the son of leader of the Argentine Jewish community was kidnapped and only released after his father had interceded with President Videla) and the Timerman case (Timerman told Congressman Gilman that he had been questioned about an international Jewish conspiracy). Notwithstanding GOA assurances that religious persecution will not be tolerated, the AJC is worried.

I have attached a cable on the Gilman-Timerman conversation to illustrate why this AJC nervousness may be well justified.

Jim Bumpus and I would like to sit in on the meeting if you have no objections.

Attachment: As stated.

Drafted: ARA/ECA: JNBumpus:jc

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6326

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-2, AND 4  
TAGS: SHUM, AR  
SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTER SEES JACOBO TIMERMAN;  
CONGRESSMAN GILMAN ALSO PERMITTED INTERVIEW WITH TIMERMAN

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6173; BUENOS AIRES 6137

1. SUMMARY. CONGRESSMAN GILMAN'S RECENT MEETING WITH  
TIMERMAN IS SUMMARIZED BELOW. THERE IS ALSO CONTAINED  
A SUMMARY OF AN ALLEGED CONFESSION MADE BY TIMERMAN  
DURING HIS CAPTIVITY. UNDER GROUND RULES ESTABLISHED  
BY THE GOA, MR. GILMAN AGREED NOT TO GIVE ANY PUBLICITY  
TO HIS MEETING. THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

CONTAINED IN THIS MESSAGE WOULD PLACE TIMERMAN IN  
IMMEDIATE JEOPARDY AND COULD ALSO ADVERSELY AFFECT  
US-ARGENTINE RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE VISIT OF CODEL YATRON TO BUENOS AIRES,  
AUGUST 17-20, REPRESENTATIVE BENJAMIN GILMAN ASKED  
FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS FOR PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW  
JACOBO TIMERMAN, THE PUBLISHER OF "LA OPINION" UNTIL  
HIS ARREST LAST APRIL IN CONNECTION WITH THE GRAIVER  
INVESTIGATION. UNTIL NOW THE ONLY INDIVIDUALS ALLOWED TO  
VISIT TIMERMAN HAVE BEEN CLOSE FAMILY MEMBERS AND HIS RABBI  
(WHO IS A UNITED STATES CITIZEN). WITHIN 24 HOURS OF  
MR. GILMAN'S REQUEST, THE FOREIGN MINISTER OBTAINED A  
GOVERNMENT DECISION TO PERMIT A CONFIDENTIAL INTERVIEW  
WHICH TOOK PLACE IN THE EVENING OF AUGUST 19 IN  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE. MR. GILMAN INTERVIEWED TIMERMAN IN  
THE PRESENCE OF A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL AND AN EMBOFF.  
AS A PRECONDITION FOR THE INTERVIEW, MR. GILMAN AGREED TO  
GROUND RULES LAID DOWN BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT HE  
WOULD NOT PUBLICIZE THE MEETING OR THE SUBSTANCE OF THE  
CONVERSATION. ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, HOWEVER, THE  
CONGRESSMAN WAS AUTHORIZED TO INFORM "HIS COLLEAGUES,"  
WHICH LATER WAS DEFINED TO INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE  
BELIEVED THAT PRESIDENT VIDELA WAS AWARE OF THE DECISION  
TO PERMIT THE INTERVIEW, BUT IT WAS BEING HELD CLOSELY  
WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT.

3. TIMERMAN WALKED UNHANDCUFFED AND ALONE INTO  
A ROOM WHERE HIS VISITORS WERE WAITING. HE CONVERSED WITH  
THE CONGRESSMAN IN ENGLISH. HE WAS DRESSED IN CASUAL  
STREET CLOTHES AND AN OLD SPORT JACKET WHICH APPEARED  
TO BE HIS OWN. HIS MANNER WAS SUBDUED, BUT HE APPEARED TO  
BE REMARKABLY IN CONTROL OF HIS MENTAL FACULTIES. IN  
FACT, HE DEMONSTRATED CONSIDERABLE ACUITY AND WIT AND HIS  
CONVERSATION WAS LACED WITH BITTERSWEET TONGUE AT TIMES.  
EXCEPT FOR A DISCOLORED (BLACK) SKIN AREA UNDER ONE  
FINGERNAIL, THERE WAS NO OUTWARD SIGN OF BRUISES.

4. MR. GILMAN ASKED HOW HE WAS BEING TREATED AND HOW HE  
WAS FEELING. TIMERMAN REPLIED THAT A PRISONER IN HIS  
CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD NOT ANSWER THAT KIND OF A QUESTION,  
BUT HE WAS ALL RIGHT NOW -- WITH EMPHASIS ON THE "NOW". HE  
DID NOT APPEAR TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY UNDERWEIGHT, BUT IT IS

POSSIBLE THAT HE HAS BEEN GAINING AGAIN IN RECENT WEEKS  
AS A RESULT OF IMPROVED TREATMENT.

5. TIMERMAN SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHY HE WAS BEING HELD, AS  
NO FORMAL CHARGES HAD BEEN LODGED AGAINST HIM. HE HAD NOT  
BEEN ALLOWED TO SEE THE MILITARY JUDGE'S INVESTIGATING  
REPORT, WHICH WAS SECRET. FROM THE NATURE OF THE QUESTIONS  
ASKED OF HIM, HOWEVER, THE MILITARY OFFICIAL'S HANDLING OF  
THE INVESTIGATION WAS NO SOURCE OF COMFORT FOR HIM. THE  
FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, ADMITTING THAT HE TOO HAD NOT  
BEEN ALLOWED TO SEE THE  
PRELIMINARY JUDICIAL REPORT, STATED THAT ACCORDING TO  
COMMON KNOWLEDGE MR. TIMERMAN WAS SUSPECTED OF "ECONOMIC  
SUBVERSION" IN CONNECTION WITH THE GRAIVER AFFAIR.  
THE OFFICIAL DOUBTED THAT TIMERMAN COULD BE GRANTED THE  
RIGHT OF OPTION OF SELF-EXILE ABROAD AS HIS CASE WAS NOW  
IN THE JUDICIAL PROCESS. TIMERMAN SAID HIS INTERROGATORS  
NEVER ONCE ASKED HIM ABOUT GRAIVER. INSTEAD, THE BULK  
OF THE QUESTIONS HAD TO DO WITH A PRESUMED WORLD JEWISH  
CONSPIRACY AGAINST ARGENTINA. HE WAS TOLD THAT SOVIET  
PREMIER KOSYGIN WAS A JEW. HIS INTERROGATORS ASKED  
WHAT HE KNEW ABOUT

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FOUO

SECRET MEETINGS BETWEEN ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BEGUIN AND THE MONTONEROS AND A SECRET PLAN OF "THE ELDERS OF ZION" (IN THE LAST CENTURY) TO TAKE OVER PATAGONIA ("PLAN ANDINA"). AT ONE TIME TIERMAN SAID HE ALMOST GAVE IN TO TEMPTATION TO PLAY ALONG WITH THE ANTISEMITIC PARANOIA OF HIS CAPTORS AND INVENT A STORY ABOUT SECRET MEETINGS OF THE "ELDERS OF ZION" IN ARGENTINA. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE HAD ASKED HIS JAILER, A SIMPLE, MAN, WHICH WAS THE EAST WALL OF HIS TINY PRISON CELL SO THAT HE COULD SAY HIS DAILY PRAYERS, BUT THIS INFORMATION LUDICROUSLY WAS DENIED ON SECURITY GROUNDS.

6. TIERMAN WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO EXPLAIN TO THE CONGRESSMAN THE GOVERNMENT'S NEED TO TAKE EXTRAORDINARY ACTION AGAINST TERRORIST SUBVERSION AND ASKED FOR THE CONGRESSMAN'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUBVERTIVE THREAT FACING THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT WHEN IT TOOK POWER. TIERMAN SAID HE WAS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE VIDELA ADMINISTRATION AND HOPED THAT THE U.S. WOULD DO EVERYTHING IT COULD TO SUPPORT VIDELA. HE COMPLAINED THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS AT TIMES NAIVELY HAD APPROACHED THE ARGENTINE QUESTION AND RECALLED THAT HE HAD OFFERED LATE LAST YEAR TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE ABOUT THE TERRORIST CONNECTIONS OF GUSTAVO ROCA AND CARLOS NUÑEZ, WHOSE TESTIMONY FRASER HAD TAKEN EARLIER. SHAKING HIS HEAD SADLY, "LOOK WHAT HAPPENS TO A MAN WHO WAS TRYING TO DEFEND THE GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

7. TIERMAN WAS VERY GRATEFUL FOR MR. GILMAN'S EFFORT TO SEE HIM AND ALSO FOR MR. GILMAN'S INTEREST IN HIS WELFARE. GILMAN EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT JUSTICE WOULD BE DONE IN THE TIERMAN CASE, IMPRESSING UPON THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL THAT TIERMAN'S CAPTIVITY HAD EARNED ARGENTINA ENORMOUS NEGATIVE PUBLICITY ABROAD. TIERMAN WAS THEN ESCORTED WITHOUT HANDCUFFS TO A JEEP WAITING OUTSIDE AND DRIVEN AWAY.

8. COMMENT: WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT TIERMAN MAY HAVE BEEN GIVEN SOME COACHING BEFORE THE MEETING, THIS IS NOT NECESSARILY THE CASE. TIERMAN DID NOT SAY ANYTHING WITH RESPECT TO U.S. POLICY AND THE NEED TO SUPPORT THE MODERATE VIDELA FORCES THAT HE HAD NOT SAID BEFORE PUBLICLY IN HIS OWN NEWSPAPER WHEN HE WAS A FREE MAN. GOVERNMENT'S MOTIVE IN ARRANGING THE INTERVIEW APPARENTLY WAS TO APPEAR TO BE RESPONSIVE TO A PRESUMABLY FRIENDLY U.S. CONGRESSMAN WHO OPPOSED SANCTIONS AGAINST ARGENTINA AND WHO PRESUMABLY WAS INFLUENTIAL IN AMERICAN JEWISH CIRCLES. ARGENTINES HAVE INORDINATE IDEAS OF INFLUENCE OF JEWISH THINKING ON U.S. DECISION-MAKING AND PURPOSE PRESUMABLY WAS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT TIERMAN WAS IN REASONABLY GOOD HEALTH AND RECEIVING GOOD TREATMENT. NEVERTHELESS, AUTHORITIES APPEARED NERVOUS ABOUT RISK THE MIGHT BE RUNNING WITH BASELINE MILITARY AND TO AVOIDED LEAVING MUCH PROPAGANDA SHOWCASE QUALITY TO THE EVENT. WE BELIEVE IT PREMATURE TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS AS TO THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE TIERMAN CASE FROM THIS EVENT. END COMMENT.

9. EMBASSY ALSO HAS BEEN CONFIDENTIALLY TRANSMITTED A SERIES OF DOCUMENTS FROM NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SOURCES THAT WE ORIGINALLY WERE TOLD WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT TIERMAN HAD CONFERRED TO SEEING A COMMUNIST AND SOVIET SPY. HOWEVER, THE DOCUMENTS WE HAVE INSTEAD INCLUDE COMMENTS PURPORTEDLY MADE BY THE POLICE

CHIEF OF THE PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES, COL. CAMPS, IN A BRIEFING ON MAY 3, 1977. REPORTEDLY ACCORDING TO CAMPS, TIERMAN DEFINED HIMSELF AS A MARXIST SINCE HIS YOUTH WHO HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS. HE ADMITTED PATTERNING HIS NEWSPAPER ALONG THE MARXIST LINES OF "LE MONDE". (GIC) HE ALSO ADMITTED THAT DAVID GRAIVER HAD PROVIDED ALL THE CAPITAL FOR THE NEWSPAPER AND THE PRINTING PLANT AND TIERMAN ORIGINALLY HAD BEEN ACCORDED A 45 PERCENT INTEREST AS THE FRUITS OF HIS LABOR. ON THE DEATH OF GRAIVER, TIERMAN ALLEGEDLY THREATENED GRAIVER'S WIDOW WITH DEATH UNLESS SHE TURNED OVER TO HIM HER LATE HUSBAND'S SHARES. HE ALLEGEDLY ADMITTED HAVING RECEIVED A \$200,000 BRIBE TO WRITE A FAVORABLE STORY ON THE ALUAR DEAL AND ANOTHER \$175,000 ON ANOTHER OCCASION BY ITT. ACCORDING TO COL. CAMPS' REPORTED STATEMENT, TIERMAN ADMITTED ALL OF THESE THINGS IN A SIGNED CONFESSION. ANOTHER DOCUMENT INCLUDED IN THE PACKET CITES MEDIA ARTICLES AS REPORTING THAT TIERMAN HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF A COMMUNIST YOUTH FRONT GROUP IN 1942, HAD ADMITTED BEING A "LEFTIST ZIONIST," HAD BEEN FRIEND OF FORMER PERONIST-ECONOMY MINISTER JOSE BER GELBARD WHOSE POLICIES HE UNCONDITIONALLY SUPPORTED IN HIS NEWSPAPER, HAD PURSUED A CONFUSED EDITORIAL LINE WHICH AT ONE TIME SUPPORTED TERRORIST SUBVERSION AND SUBSEQUENTLY ATTACKED IT AND WHO WAS A SELF-CONFESSED SUPPORTER OF EURO-COMMUNISM AS OPPOSED TO THE SOVIET LINE. THERE IS ALSO A HODGEPODGE OF OTHER CHARGES SUCH AS THAT HE HIRED WELL-KNOWN LEFTISTS AND ALLEGED TERRORIST SUPPORTERS ON HIS NEWSPAPER STAFF.

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